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MUSICAL GOSSIP.

Grisi's re-appearance at Her Majesty's—London—or Mapleson's Opera House, as Lucrezia Borgia, attracted the most brilliant audience of this season, proving, as the *Musical World* sneeringly remarks: "There is magic still in the name." The Prince of Wales, Prince Alfred, their future relative, Prince of Teck, the Prince and Princess of Saxe-Weimar, were present, and that large house was "cramped" with nobility and fashion. Mongini was the Gennaro, Gassier, Duke Alphonso; Mlle. Bettelheim, Orsini. No other comment is made by the *Musical World* upon that performance than "An extraordinary impression was created by an air from Donizetti's 'Don Sebastiano,' which Signor Mongini introduced (as substitute for the original solo), and in which the power and quality of his voice were exhibited to marvelous advantage. This was the sensation of the evening."

"Lucrezia Borgia," as performed now-a-days, is terribly cut up. That air, a duet and the best chorus in Italian Opera are shorn off, because singers fear to undertake their execution, just as the challenge duet in "Lucia Lammermoor," and the priest's grand vocal opportunities, are smothered by about every opera company.

The *Musical World* significantly remarks on May 12th, "Mme. Grisi has cancelled her engagement with the director of Her Majesty's Theater." No comment is made upon such a queer proceeding after his pompous announcement in opening programmes that she would appear in various operas, or any explanation given.

Gluck's "Iphigenia in Tauris," after one postponement, was given on May 8th, but we find no comment on its performance in that journal, or respecting "Les Huguenots" given May 10th; beyond this: "'Iphigenia in Tauris' was produced last night with genuine success. The performance was in every respect worthy of the masterpiece, which crowned Gluck's triumph over his great Italian rival, Piccini. We can merely add that Gardoni, Santley, Gassier and Titiens were the principals, that the house was crowded, and the opera received with every mark of favor." That writer thinks Lady Henrietta is hardly suited to Titiens' grand style, but it is a genuine treat to hear her rich tones employed in "The Last Rose of Summer." Mongini's splendid voice touched him in "M'appari tutti amor," and Santley's delivery of the "Beer Song" also moved his sympathies. All those songs were encored, and Mlle. Bettelheim's vivacious Nancy enlivened the audience vastly, but still that writer sighs for novelty and protests loudly against more of "Il Trovatore." He goes into raptures about Mme. Vilda's magnificent soprano, as exhibited in "Norma," which he declares to be equal throughout, the higher notes bright, clear and sonorous, the middle round and mellow, the lower rich and powerful. It enchants at once, and recalls, in some features, that of Sophie Cruvelli.

De Murska is announced for "La Sonnambula," with Mongini and Santley to assist her.

Adelina Patti re-appeared in London as Rosina—"Il Barbiere di Siviglia"—with Ronconi as Figaro, Mario as Count Almaviva, Ciampi as Bartolo.

"L'Africaine" re-appeared May 12th, with Naudin as Vasco di Gama.

Mlle. Lucca announces, for May 21st, her first grand concert at St. James's Hall, with this grand array of artists, Mlles. Fricci, Orgeni, Decol, Morensi, Poelnitz, and Mme. Vilda; Signori Mario, Lucchesi, Brignoli, Nicolini, Ronconi, Tagliafico, Capponi, Ciampi and Graziani. Mlle. Krebs, pianist, and two grand conductors. Tickets ranged from one guinea, for stall seats, to 10s and 6d for reserved.

Sims Reeves, on entering Newcastle to sing at Hare's grand concert, was greeted with a merry peal of bells from St. Nicholas's Church steeple for a *fun fare*.

Titiens, Sherrington, Dolby, Reeves, Santley,

Lewis Thomas, &c., have been engaged for this year's Worcester festival.

Austin, of St. James' Hall, received this year at his annual concert a like overflowing testimonial of public esteem as last year witnessed. Reeves and Parepa were especially honored with applause, of their same old songs.

Agnes Zimmerman and Rose Hersee were equally fortunate in commencing their serial concerts. So was Walter Macferren, in fact London seemed to be in early May exuberant toward concert givers and they were not bashful in claiming public favor.

Laura Harris, back from Madrid's glorification, was negotiating with Mapleson for operatic performance.

Arabella Goddard's benefit concert, at St. James' Hall, had a crowded and fashionable audience, beside which she received most ecstatic and glowing notices from the *World*.

The Crystal Palace Concert, with 1000 performers of Handel's "Acis and Galatea," was a great success for Titiens and Santley, but the choruses only went "as steadily as under the circumstances could have been expected," says the *World* in which the fourth Philharmonic and second New Philharmonic are once more criticised and this time with general commendation.

Dublin was greatly excited on May 7th and 8th—not by wicked Fenians but by the inauguration of Winter Gardens in that city with musical performance before crowds of Dublin's very *creme de la creme*. Mme. Sherrington and Miss Kate Cruise were the vocal stars, the latter a young lady, endowed with a sweet and good ranging soprano, beside ample confidence, in fact a well-cultivated singer.

Alberto Laurence is reported to have made a hit as Nelusko at Turin.

Charles Adams brought with him from Berlin a handsome gold bracelet set with brilliants, intrusted to his care for Pauline Lucca by the Queen of Prussia. A great honor for our Yankee tenor.

Mela, the female tenor, who failed at Les Italiens, is said by the London *World's* correspondent to have a deep and rather powerful soprano of indifferent quality, with very slight knowledge of the art of singing. Her father's opera, "Casino in Campagna" was tried after "L'Italana in Algeria," but no better result ensued. He pronounces this season one of the most disastrous known at Les Italiens.

"Don Juan" had tolerable success at Le Lyrique. Mesdames Charton, Nillson, Carvalho, Messieurs Michot, Troy, Barre, and Despasson; Mme. Carvalho being the favorite of that public.

Cruvelli is, *on dit*, to sing in Paris, for an institution which aids the abandoned poor of that city. At Nice, recently, she is reported to have sang the soprano and tenor part of Verdi's "Miserere" in a grand musical solemnity performed there.

Adelina Patti made her adieux to Auber this year in person so as to express her gratitude for his musical autograph sent by him. The *World's* correspondent thinks she must sing Zerlina's music in London after that.

Liszt has been crowned and glorified without stint in Amsterdam, where his 13th Psalm and old Mass were as usual palatable.

Cisotti's new opera produced at La Radegondo, was but a sorry affair; the libretto, a ridiculous parody of Byron's "Bride of Abydos," thrown together without regard to syntax, grammar, or common sense. The music is a monotonous repetition of all the forms and ideas of a past school, and the opera went three nights only. Milan, he says, cries out "Guerra," "Guerra," and theatres are nearly deserted.

The quartet society's third concert had two prize works—a concerto for piano-forte with string quartet accompaniment written by Crenio which is declared by that correspondent to be a work of genius and conscience, that he writes for the piano-forte elegantly with charming idea and good constructive talent, and a string quar-

tet by Bazzini; applause rewarded both music and execution.

Metzler & Co.'s auction sale in London of their copy rights went off well, and one piece written by Cassidy, a Burlesque Galop, sold for £252, the highest price ever paid there for a single piece of dance music. The whole amount attained by this sale of 55,000 copy rights, is not mentioned, but at the rates named for those which sold highest the grand total must have reached a very large sum.

Gye is reported to have sent Adelina Patti £400, nominally, to purchase a bouquet while she lingered in Paris, rather indisposed to visit London, but undoubtedly as reminder that she must fulfil her engagement at Covent Garden Opera House. Adelina took at once such a delicate hint and came at once to expectant Gye.

The London *Orchestra* asserts that Grisi's "Lucrezia Borgia" was a horrible *fiasco* vocally considered, but her acting of that role showed very slight decline from past years. Her voice, he says, is no longer available in opera, and the exhibit made on that first night excited alternate merriment and grief that a once grand artist should have so mistaken her vocal powers and lingered on the stage until she became a laughing stock. We should doubt this extreme statement, but for the conceded fact that she canceled her engagement with Mapleson after the first performance.

Statement has been made in reference to Grisi's *fiasco* at Mapleson's opera which color up the affair intensely, but lack truth for their warrant. One fanciful writer asserts that she was born in 1806, and is now, consequently, sixty years old. The fact is that she first saw the light of day in 1813, and made her debut with Pasta in Bellini's "Norma," at the age of eighteen, having been a chorister in the Milan opera for a short time previous. She was a niece of Grassini, a very distinguished prima donna, and just before "Norma" was produced the Adalgisa designated became unavailable. All parties were perplexed, to find a substitute, and finally it was suggested that a beautiful chorister might be equal to such a party, so Grisi obtained her great opportunity, and instantly became a celebrity. That celebrity endured until 1861-2, when it became evident that she no longer commanded public favor as the grand dramatic prima donna. She retired on engagement with Gye not to appear in opera for three years thereafter, but occasionally had concert engagements, more or less extensive, the last in England's provinces being quite extensive, and reported as very successful in all respects. Like Pasta, Sontag, and others, she constantly longed for the renewal of triumphs in opera, and would not be satisfied with the large results of thirty years experience as prima donna in grand opera. When her irksome contract with Gye expired, she at once moved on the public as prima donna, and met a disastrous rebuff on the first night, beside getting the laugh against her. Mario, her adored spouse, lingers yet—not superfluous—on the lyric stage, but soon both must retire to Catalani's splendid villa near Florence, and enjoy, like Rossini in his villa near Paris, the delicious Italian *dolce far niente*.

Another celebrity of Italian opera—Rosina Penco—is said to be engaged by Maretzek for his coming Italian Opera Season here. So is Senorita Poch, a Spanish lady who has been both in Barcelona and here the pupil of Senor Abella. We are not apprized of Maretzek's other engagements, but hear a report that a soprano leggiera, of Polish birth, endowed with a brilliant voice and good culture, has also been engaged by him for next season.

Parisians claim exquisite taste in music, but if report be true as to their patronage of Therese—the famous singer of course sings in a Cafe Chantante—those claims are not well founded. She now receives 140,000 francs per annum in that "free and easy."